

Marion School District 60-3  
School Board Plan August 16, 2021  
Back to School COVID/ARP ESSER Plan  
Plan is posted on: <http://marion.k12.sd.us/>  
Created: August 9, 2021

Last revised: December 7, 2022

Contact person for questions: Superintendent Brad Berens

## **Introduction**

As we plan for the 2023-2024 school year affected by COVID, we will work to maintain our risk mitigation approach, and maintain normal operations with the expectations that pandemic education, reporting, contact tracing, isolation and quarantining for exposure remain in place. We desire to have an environment where students and staff are as safe as or safer from COVID-19 than they would be in the general community. As the pipeline for providers of essential services, Pre K -12 education is an essential service and must continue to operate effectively in the COVID-19 environment. This plan is fluid and may require changes throughout the year in response to the community and school district spread of COVID.

## **Goal of the Plan and Coordination with State and Local Officials**

The Marion School District has created a plan to create a safe and caring learning environment while reducing the impact of COVID-19 for students, staff, and community/visitors. The guidelines referenced in this plan are from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), South Dakota Department of Health (SD DOH), and the South Dakota Department of Education (SD DOE). The plan may be updated regularly as new information becomes available.

The goal of the Marion School District is to start school as scheduled on or about August 21, 2023, with all students in the school building. This is a leveled system approach for our students, staff, and community's safety. The leveled approach will be enacted based on the number of cases we have locally and through guidance from the South Dakota Department of Health and our area health care system. Advice will be provided by the South Dakota Department of Health, South Dakota Department of Education, and area health care providers to determine if school will have to occur through online learning or remote learning based on our local community cases.

The American Academy of Physicians strongly advocates that, depending on the extent of COVID-19 outbreaks within the community, children be physically present in school this academic year. As pediatricians they know the importance of in-person learning and have seen the negative consequences in their patients when school was delivered through an online platform.

We respect the CDC and elements and strategies are generally consistent with CDC guidelines and SD Health Department guidance. Elements and strategies presented in this

plan will be implemented to the extent that is practicable for the Marion School District and community.

### **The Return-To-Learn Plan Priorities:**

The following are priorities of the Back-To-School plan:

1. Maximize the on-campus, hands-on time and opportunities for our students using a “return to normal” approach with regards to people’s behavior.
  - a. Education on COVID, its symptoms, and personal protections steps for students and staff:
    - i. Stay at home if you are sick or have unexplained symptoms or fever.
    - ii. Personal hygiene especially hand washing with soap or disinfectant for 20 seconds at least and avoiding touching your face,
    - iii. Sanitization with cleaning materials available in classrooms,
    - iv. Social distancing 3 feet minimum- classroom and lunchroom through facility modification.
    - v. Vaccination
    - vi. Universal and correct use of masks which are encouraged but not required.
    - vii. Cover nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing.
    - viii. Healthy facility will be promoted; Air filters will be changed on regular basis and windows open to improve ventilation.
  - b. Testing and reporting COVID infections and exposure in a timely manner.
  - c. Isolating and quarantining in accordance with CDC guidelines. Exposed people who have no symptoms and have been vaccinated are exempt from quarantine; whether identified in school or out.
  - d. Programs must remain prepared to fully support isolated and quarantined students to keep them on pace with their peers.
  - e. Vaccinations are highly encouraged but are not required by the school.
  - f. Correct use of masks is encouraged but not required for students and staff who have not been vaccinated.
2. Continued monitoring of staff and student cases with rapid reporting to preclude an outbreak; and
3. Contingency plans for the event of a school outbreak or other catalyst that require a significant number of students to work remotely.

### **Criteria for implementation of the Return-To-Learn Plan**

Implementation of measures in this plan are based on CDC and SD Health Dept. guidelines. We know that adaptation and flexibility are key to responding to COVID, but we must maintain a practical mitigation approach that responds to the data and circumstances in our community. Therefore, the local COVID-19 infection rates, spread rate, case severity, and school spread remain triggers for variations to this plan. This will be one of the means to ensure students have access to needed services for academic success. The district also recently acquired a new math series and plans to acquire a new reading series to provide the latest in researched based methodology to assist students. MAP achievement series will also be added to continually monitor student learning and make instruction alterations.

Other triggers could include but not limited to drive adjustments to this plan making it more or less restrictive. These triggers include:

- Community spread significant changes- in consultation with area healthcare providers this could trigger work from home and skeleton crew, and students potentially back to online.
- Guidance from state or city.
- Government orders a shelter in place or lockdown
- Significant number of employees or students are sick with COVID- 19

#### *Bullying policy*

- Shaming of individuals for using masks, receiving or not receiving vaccination or for any other implementation of the school COVID plan is prohibited. This aspect of the COVID plan will be administered through the district bullying policy.

### **Diagnostic and Screening procedures and Protocols**

- Students should not come to school before 7:45 AM
- Students will enter through the front door
- Hand sanitizing stations will be available at all entrances/exits
- *Parents are asked to check their students' symptoms before sending them to school*
- General student temperature checks may be conducted, and temperature checks will be done on a child showing any symptoms of fever, cough or having difficulty breathing
- A temperature above 100 will require the student to be moved to the stage while parents/guardians are contacted to pick up their child.
- The lunchroom will have extra tables that will allow spacing out of students to every other seat. Seating charts may be implemented in the classroom and lunchroom

### **Covid-19 Vaccinations**

- [If you are fully vaccinated](#), you can resume activities that you did before the pandemic without wearing a mask or physically distancing, except where required by laws, rules, regulations, or school rules.

- Members of your family who are unvaccinated, have weakened immune systems, or underlying medical conditions need to continue to take steps to protect themselves from COVID-19.
- In general, people are considered fully vaccinated: ±
  - 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or
  - 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson’s vaccine
 If you don’t meet these requirements, regardless of your age, you are NOT fully vaccinated. Keep taking all [precautions](#) until you are fully vaccinated.

If you are vaccinated and are a close contact of someone who has COVID-19, you do not need to quarantine or get tested unless you have symptoms.

The Marion School District will only know you are vaccinated if you voluntarily provide the information.

Identifying Cases in School Questions and Answers ([SD Department of Education and the SD DOH K12 & Covid-19 Document](#))



**Household Members Test Positive**

Assuming the infected individual did not enter the school, this would not be considered a confirmed case in the school. The unvaccinated student or staff member who lives with the infected individual would be considered a close contact and would be asked to self-quarantine per CDC guidelines.



## **Extracurricular Activities**

SDHSAA and SD DOH guidelines will be followed for all extracurricular activities. The Administration may cancel events upon consultation with SD DOH.

Activities will take place as scheduled if remote learning is activated for a period of time due to staff illness.

While participating in activities, students and staff will adhere to the home team's COVID-19 protocol and procedures.

## **Locker Rooms**

While in locker rooms, students are to practice social distancing, which means attempting to stay 3 feet from others as a normal practice. Eliminate contact with others, such as handshakes. Avoid touching surfaces touched by others to the extent feasible. Avoid anyone who is coughing, sneezing or appears to be sick.

## **Special Education**

The Marion School District will continue to provide appropriate accommodations with respect to health and safety policies and educational opportunities for all students. The school will ensure students with disabilities also have equal access to the same opportunities, including Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). Students with a disability can be provided special education and related services identified in the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) developed under IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Plan), or a plan developed under Section 504.

"If a child with a disability is absent for an extended period of time because of a COVID-19 infection and the school remains open, then the IEP Team must determine whether the child is available for instruction and could benefit from homebound services such as online or virtual instruction, instructional telephone calls, and other curriculum-based instructional activities, to the extent available." ([\*SD DOE; Providing Services to Students with Disabilities\*](#)).

[SD Department of Education's Guide for Special Education](#)

## **Social Emotional Well-being of Students' and Staff**

The social and emotional well-being of students and staff is always a priority. The school district will continue to work with our mental health professionals, and counselor to provide families and staff with up to date, accessible resources when needed. Staff will work with parent(s)/guardian(s) and students individually or in a group setting to assist with students' social and emotional wellbeing.

## **Services to Address Students Academic Needs**

Our plan is to provide a more effective and efficient remote learning opportunities for students if the need arises. Links to staff email, websites, Planbook, and classroom platforms such as Google Classroom will be located on the landing page for ease of access to remote learning material. ~~Staff will be provided with training during in-service times at the start of the year.~~

## **Beginning of the School Day and End of the Day Procedures**

While in level zero of the [\*Marion School District Return to Learn Plan\*](#), students will be allowed to play on the playground before school with doors opening no earlier than 7:45am for breakfast. If a move to level 1 of the [\*Marion School District Return to Learn Plan\*](#) is needed, school doors will still open no earlier than 7:45am on school days.

### **Marion Level System-**

The school district will enact the *Plan* when cases of COVID occur within the community and the DOH has identified our area as a level 3 substantial spread. The administration will work with SD DOH and our area health care providers to determine the best course of action within our school district. The school district administration will decide on what level we will implement based on the number of cases in our area and the recommendation of S.D. DOH and our area health care providers.

**Level 0:** Low to moderate cases spread amongst our community as identified by the DOH. S.D. DOH recommends school remains in sessions. Students are to follow guidelines provided in the *Marion School District Return to Learn Plan*. Masks are recommended but not required for students and staff in common areas or while working near one another.

Day-to-day school operations will take place as close to traditional as possible.

**Level 1:** Moderate to high cases identified in our community by the DOH. Meaning students/staff members have been identified as being in close contact of a positive Covid-19 case outside of the school community. The SD DOH recommends school remains in session and to follow guidelines provided in the *Marion School District Return to Learn plan*.

Masks are recommended but not required for students and staff in common areas or while working near one another. Increased social distance will be used where applicable. Traditional breakfast and hot lunch will take place.

**Level 2:** Very high level of positive cases identified by the DOH in the school and the community. Students/staff members have been identified as a positive Covid-19 case. S.D. DOH recommends that school officials reassess the plan and process - looking for gaps in prevention strategies. CDC and SD DOH will recommend closing off areas used by the sick person and waiting 24 hours (if feasible) before cleaning and disinfecting. SD DOH will contact school administration for further instruction and contact tracing information. SD DOH recommends that schools may stay open and follow guidelines provided in *Marion School District Return to Learn Plan and Process*.

Possible closures:

1. Same grades only
2. Students only
3. K-5 only, or 6-12 only
4. 72-hour cleaning cycles
5. 14-day quarantine cycles

Students and staff may be required to wear a mask in situations administration deems necessary. A traditional breakfast and hot lunch will take place with the use of disposable products; trays and silverware. If social distancing cannot occur, lunch services will be provided in the classroom. The administration may determine that some classes will eat in their classrooms if needed to try and adhere to social distancing recommendations from the CDC, and SD DOH.

**Level 3:** If school closure is necessary because of severe risk or spread, we will follow the steps listed below.

Options for remote learning attendance:

1. All staff report to school but students do not; remote learning will be accessed through the school district virtual learning.
2. Facilities will be closed to everyone.

The Marion School District will remain in Level Three until positive cases have been determined to no longer be contagious, the amount of quarantine days have passed, no other positive cases have been covered and the SD DOH has been contacted for guidance and recommendations.

### **Academics and Home-Based Learning Expectations**

When the school district determines, through advice from S.D. DOH and our area health system, the use of remote learning or students that have chosen remote learning. That means during each “virtual” school day, a new lesson will be presented for the students. Students are expected to attend live online classes during their scheduled class time

***If reliable internet service is an issue for participating in online instruction, families can make accommodations by contacting the school offices.***

### **Remote Learning Expectations**

Remote learning will not be an option during the 2023-2024 school year, unless the need arises due to an increasing amount of positive cases while in level 1 of the [\*Marion School District Return to Learn Plan\*](#), students may opt for face-to-face or remote learning instruction from home. Students selecting the remote learning format will be required to complete distance learning until the end of the current quarter. The model for receiving education, whether face-to-face or virtually will be reassessed after each quarter.

### **K-5 Grading Policy/Attendance/Instruction**

Students are to complete their assignments and be in attendance for each course whether they attend school in the face-to-face or virtual learning setting. The grading policy will remain the same and can be found in the student handbook. Students are determined to be truant if they are not completing their assignments (face-to-face or virtually) or if they do not schedule and attend their mandatory missing work appointment with their teachers. When

calculating instructional hours, these remote learning days count the same as a day of instruction and should be recorded as such in the student information system

### **6-12 Grading Policy/Attendance/Instructional Hours**

Students are to complete their assignments and be in attendance for each course whether they attend school in the face-to-face or virtual learning setting. Students in grades 9-12 must complete assignments and be in attendance to receive credit. The grading policy will remain the same and can be found in the student handbook.

### **Overarching guidance and concepts remain available and visible**

The “Return to Learn COVID Plan” remains as a primary conceptual approach and acts as the primary contingency plan should an outbreak occur. The Marion School District will use the CDC and SD DOH as a guide and will utilize their program elements and recommendations to the extent practicable for the school district and community. This is considered a fluid document that may be adjusted throughout the year in response to the level of community and school district spread of COVID-19.

The Marion School Board will seek public input on whether to revise safe return plans a minimum of every six months. The district will note the review date separate from school board approval date. The plan will be reviewed no less frequent than the following schedule:

Revised - December, 2021

Revised - June, 2022

Revised - December, 2022

June, 2022